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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord, You are God. Heaven and Earth are filled with Your glory. Use our law-makers to hasten the day when acts of justice and compassion will mark our society and people will celebrate the common bonds they share. May this bond of justice, compassion, and unity first be seen in this Chamber, providing a model for our citizens to emulate. Where there is pain, Lord, send Your healing. Where there is despair, send Your hope. Where there is darkness, send Your light. Where there is conflict, send Your peace.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 6, 2012.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, a Senator from the State of Connecticut, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 3 p.m. today. Following morning business, the Senate will begin consideration of the conference report on the FAA Reauthorization Act. At 5:30 p.m., there will be a rollcall vote on adoption of that conference report.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2064

Mr. REID. Mr. President, S. 2064 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2064) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to terminate certain energy tax subsidies and lower the corporate income tax rate.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings on this bill at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the matter will be placed on the calendar.

AVIATION AND PAYROLL TAX CONFERENCES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today, I am pleased the Senate will pass the aviation jobs conference report. This measure is the first long-term reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Adminis-

tration in almost 5 years. The FAA has worked under 23 short-term extensions since 2007. In fact, the FAA was shut down last year. That is right, workers were furloughed and construction at airports terminated.

The 4-year compromise we will pass this evening doesn't give everyone everything they want, but that is the way legislation is. It will, however, finally give the FAA the ability it needs to properly maintain a world-class air travel system.

The aviation jobs bill will also create thousands of jobs—about 300,000—and it will protect airline workers and improve safety for travelers. This legislation will create badly needed jobs and it will give the FAA the ability to finally upgrade the country's air traffic control system.

Today, America relies on World War II era technology to track aircraft and to guide them to safe landings. An upgrade to modern satellite technology is long overdue. The aviation jobs bill will finally make that critical investment possible. It will invest more than \$24 billion in airports and runways across the Nation and on modern air traffic control equipment.

I am very happy that Democrats and Republicans were finally able to reach this compromise. I wish the spirit of compromise would also extend to ongoing conference committee negotiations on a year-long payroll tax cut. I was dismayed to read this morning that rank-and-file Republicans in both Chambers are on the fence over whether we should extend this break for working families. More than 160 million Americans will benefit, with an average family savings this year of \$1,000. That is taxes they won't have to pay.

Republicans are questioning whether Americans need that extra cash, and they are once again playing politics and putting our economy at risk at a crucial time when we need to work out a compromise. Democrats have offered

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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